



(U//FOUO) You Can't Keep the NSC Waiting!.. A Day in the Life of a GRSOC Analyst

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(TS//SI) "The National Security Council is interested in a Qeshm Air flight from Iran to Syria tonight that is probably carrying a load of weapons for the Hezbollah. You need to cover the flight and report everything you get. CIA is standing by to pass your reports to Ms. Rice." The NSOC Senior Operations Officer was clear and to the point. He wasn't concerned that my duty day had ended and I was on my way home. As the senior analyst in GRSOC's Iranian Military Division, J3O3, it was my responsibility to make sure the NSC got what they wanted.

(S//SI) I immediately grabbed the team chief working the Iranian Air Force mission, who had the misfortune of working a little late, and we started developing our game plan to cover the flight. Since the GRSOC collection manager was gone for the day, we placed a conference call to the Overhead Collection Management Center and discussed our collection needs. We had to cover all possible frequencies, routes, and SIGINT tipping and reporting procedures for the flight, as well as coordinate with the Syrian shop within GRSOC as they would cover the plane once it entered Syrian air space. Our shift linguists and analysts were gone for the day so the team chief would cover the collection and language work. I would man the shift reporting position and issue KLIIEGLIGHTS (a time-sensitive reporting vehicle) on the flight, tip NSOC and the Syrian shop, write the end-product reports and send email information directly to senior officials at CIA to pass on to the NSC. The pressure was immense but I loved every minute of it. (Yes, we covered the flight and gave the NSC exactly the information they needed!)

(S//SI) Every day wasn't quite that intense, but each day did present unique challenges. Since US military commanders and administration officials were never quite sure how Iran, the third member of the "Axis of Evil," would react to the US Global War on Terrorism it was my responsibility to make sure any anticipated or actual reaction to US forces was reportedly as quickly and accurately as possible. In order to do this, I had to provide technical and end-product reporting guidance to a team of military and civilian analysts working at least two shifts - days and swings. On the surface this seemed quite easy, but the fact that 75 percent of our analysts were first term military members straight out of technical training made it more challenging. Guidance had to be comprehensive enough to cover all required items but simple enough for a junior analyst to understand in the middle of the night during some high-interest activity. I would then have to review their reporting and provide feedback that would correct any problems yet not discourage their efforts.

(S//SI) I would also edit reports prior to release and often had to assist the various teams by producing reports on a variety of topics from an Iranian Air Force assessment of US airborne SIGINT operations to the status of air defense weapons guarding the



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nuclear facility under construction in the port city of Bushehr.

(S//SI) Working as an analyst at GRSOC gives you the opportunity to fully experience the SIGINT process - GET IT, KNOW IT, USE IT. There aren't many places outside of NSOC that have given me such a personal and professional sense of accomplishment. If you're looking for a challenge, I couldn't recommend a location better than this one!

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